

NPL Site Narrative for Commencement Bay, Near Shore/Tide Flats

COMMENCEMENT BAY, NEAR SHORE/TIDE FLATS Pierce County, Washington

Conditions at listing (October 1981): The Commencement Bay, Nearshore/Tideflats Site covers about 16 acres in Pierce County around Tacoma, Washington. The area is heavily industrialized and includes a copper smelter, pulp mill, and several chemical industries. About 50,000 people live nearby. High levels of arsenic and aluminum are found in soils in heavily populated residential areas, and high levels of arsenic have been found in the urine of nearby school children. A wide range of pollutants is found in the waterways of the tideflats. The land is predominantly privately owned, although a Port Authority is on-site, and an Indian tribe claims much of the area. The extent of past versus on-going contamination is unknown.

This is one of two Commencement Bay Sites. They were considered one site when they were first listed.

Status (July 1983): In April 1983, EPA awarded a \$1,357,751 Cooperative Agreement to Washington for a remedial investigation to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site. The work is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 1985. In addition, EPA and the State are considering a number of legal actions under other environmental laws.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.